

Virginia Board of Pharmacy PIC Responsibilities

*This document is intended to assist a new pharmacist-in-charge (PIC) as a reminder of some of the responsibilities, and some "do's" and "don'ts". It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all responsibilities and is not intended to negate individual responsibility of any other pharmacist practicing at the location. **Pharmacists should not be fearful that, by merely being the PIC of a pharmacy, they will be the subject of Board action for circumstances which are beyond their control.** Routine inspection deficiencies will usually be assigned to the facility permit rather than an individual PIC. The Board will not hold a PIC responsible for violations of law or regulation which are attributed to another pharmacist or which are solely the fault or responsibility of the owner.*

New Pharmacies:

- It is your responsibility to ensure that your pharmacy is ready to be inspected on the date assigned. At least 24 hours prior to a scheduled opening make sure that the pharmacy is ready, i.e. all enclosures to the prescription department are in place with appropriate locks on entrances, all counters and shelving are in place, hot and cold running) is working and at proper temperature with monitoring thermometer, all minimum equipment is in place, and the alarm system is functional and fully protects the prescription department. Please note that Regulation 18 VAC 110-20-180 requires that the alarm device must be capable of detecting breaking by any means when activated, monitored in accordance with accepted industry standards, maintained in operating order, have an auxiliary source of power, and be capable of sending an alarm signal to the monitoring entity when breached if the communication line is not operational. The system must be approved prior to stocking drugs. On the opening inspection, the inspector will "walk test" the system to ensure that there are no areas within the prescription department uncovered by the alarm. For example, if an inspector can stand in a corner of a bay and move his arms without setting off the alarm, the alarm will not pass. In most cases, more than one sensor is necessary to provide complete coverage. The inspector will also want documentation of monitoring and the ability to alert the monitoring company if the alarm system is breached even when the communication line is cut. Although not required, some PICs find it very helpful to have an alarm technician present at the time of the inspection to answer any questions the inspector may have or to make any adjustments or additions necessary to bring the system into compliance which may negate the need for a reinspection.
- If the new pharmacy will not be ready, you or the owner should notify the inspector as soon as it is known in order that they do not make an unnecessary trip. If the inspector is not notified and the pharmacy cannot reasonably be inspected, a \$150 reinspection fee will be assessed in order to schedule and conduct the reinspection.
- As PIC of a new pharmacy, you should be present at the opening inspection of the pharmacy. If you are not able to be present at the opening, you need to notify the Board prior to the date of the inspection with the reason why you are not able to be present. Additionally, you must ensure that another Virginia licensed pharmacist is present if you are absent. If deficiencies are noted on the opening inspection, drugs may not be stocked and the permit will not be issued until you assure the Board that the deficiencies have been corrected and the Board gives approval.
- If any deficiencies are noted on the opening inspection, as the PIC, you must personally notify the Board of corrections made prior to a permit being issued. Therefore, you should personally inspect any corrections to be sure they have been made properly before contacting the Board.

Upon taking over responsibility as PIC:

- You are not a PIC until the Board approves your signed application. Make sure when you sign an application to be a PIC that you are not still on record with the Board as being a PIC for more than one other pharmacy. Once you are approved as PIC, the Board will issue a pharmacy permit in your name.

This is your permit. It must be displayed where the public can read it. If you do not receive the permit within two weeks of sending in the application call the Board and check on the status (804)-367-4456. All pharmacy permits expire on 4/30 annually. Be sure that the permit is renewed each year.

- A PIC is required to be in "full and actual charge of the pharmacy" and "fully engaged in the practice of pharmacy at the location designated on the application". Never agree to sign a pharmacy permit application as PIC unless you intend to meet the requirement of being fully engaged in practice at that pharmacy. There is no minimum number of hours established to define "fully engaged etc."
- Take an incoming change of PIC inventory of all Schedule II – V controlled substances upon your takeover as PIC. If the pharmacy is a new pharmacy and you have no drugs on hand on opening date, you still "take" an inventory, and record a zero balance. Always remember to sign and date the inventory and indicate whether it was taken at opening or closing of business.
- Verify that every pharmacist working at your pharmacy holds a current license to practice pharmacy. Licensure can be verified by using the "license lookup" function on the Board's website at www.dhp.virginia.gov/pharmacy, calling the Board at (804) 367-4456, or if you know the license number or social security number of the individual, you may call (804) 270-6836 for automated verification.
- Verify that every pharmacy technician working at your pharmacy holds a current registration via the methods listed in the previous item, or that there is documentation on site showing enrollment in a Board approved training program for not more than 9 months.
- You are responsible for ensuring that the practice of pharmacy is in overall compliance with laws and regulations. You are not responsible for individual actions of practicing pharmacists. You should review pharmacy security equipment and procedures to ensure that it meets requirements, such as functional locks on enclosures, functional alarm systems, and access to keys and alarm restricted to pharmacists practicing at the location, including any emergency key kept in compliance with current regulations. Also review record keeping systems to make sure they meet current requirements and that staff pharmacists are aware of their responsibilities.
- Notify the Board of any theft or unusual losses of drugs as soon as discovered.
- Notify the Board of any known violation of law or regulation on the part of another individual in your pharmacy or of any inability to have known deficiencies corrected.

Upon leaving as PIC:

- Although not required by law or regulation, you have the right to take an outgoing change of pharmacist-in-charge inventory of all Schedule II-V controlled substances unless the owner submits written notice to the board showing good cause as to why this opportunity should not be allowed. If you so take one, you should take a **copy** with you. Once you leave, you cannot ensure that the pharmacy will maintain it, and this inventory is your documentation of what drugs were on hand when you left if there is a subsequent diversion. If you request but are denied an opportunity to take this inventory, you should immediately report this to the Board.
- As you terminate your position as PIC, remove the pharmacy permit and return it directly to the Board office indicating the effective date of the termination of the PIC position. Do not leave it on the wall. Do not return it to a corporate or district office or a district manager. It is your permit and your responsibility to return it to the Board immediately. For your protection, we would suggest that you return it by certified mail, return receipt requested.